



Park Administrative & Visitor Center



Left: The Park's current 800 sf, 34 year 'temporary' contact station, cannot meet the public need for orientation and the park's need for administrative offices. It is too small. **Right:** The 12,000 sf Warren Barn (R), the preferred alternative for this use cited in the 1993 GMP, is too large, and functions best as a barn. The Park supports new construction that creates a 'right-sized' structure in the appropriate location.

Current Status:

The park is seeking funding to conduct an archeological survey on 11 acres of the park's development zone to determine the best location for a 4400-6000 sf structure to serve as the park's visitor contact structure and park offices. Once determined, the park will submit a line item funding request for support. A 2009/2010 design charrette, Value Analysis (CBA/VA) and cost estimate place the needed funds at \$3.5-5 million (Class C estimate), to construct a modest, environmentally responsible, LEED certified 5000 sf structure. The design charrette was conducted on the heels of an updated 2009 Foundation Statement that validated conflicts using a modified Warren Barn as a visitor center.

Background:

The approved 1993 General Management Plan/EIS selected the Warren Barn as the preferred alternative for a visitor center/admin facility, with new construction as a second alternative. Since that time, conditions have changed and a new look at where to best serve arriving visitors was warranted. Public access to the park from the Warren Barn would cross an active railroad at grade- a safety liability the park is unable to change with BN&SF, the operating company. Currently, the barn serves as a center for the working ranch activities, well located to work cattle and support preservation maintenance needs in the adjacent workshop. In 2006, the Warren Ranch complex, which includes the barn, was listed on the National Register at state level significance and both SHPO and key stakeholders favor leaving the barn as a barn without major modification. During the architectural analysis, the cost to build a 'structure within a structure', if the 12,000 sf Warren Barn was used, was twice what a well built, new structure would cost. That use would compromise character defining elements that preserve the integrity of the barn, like the glue laminated beams, the winched ramp and the cavernous second floor, making it difficult for visitors to see the barn's original genius. For these reasons, new construction is now preferred.